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YOUTH EXCHANGE

CIVIC & LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

18-28 May 2026

Sunny Beach, Bulgaria

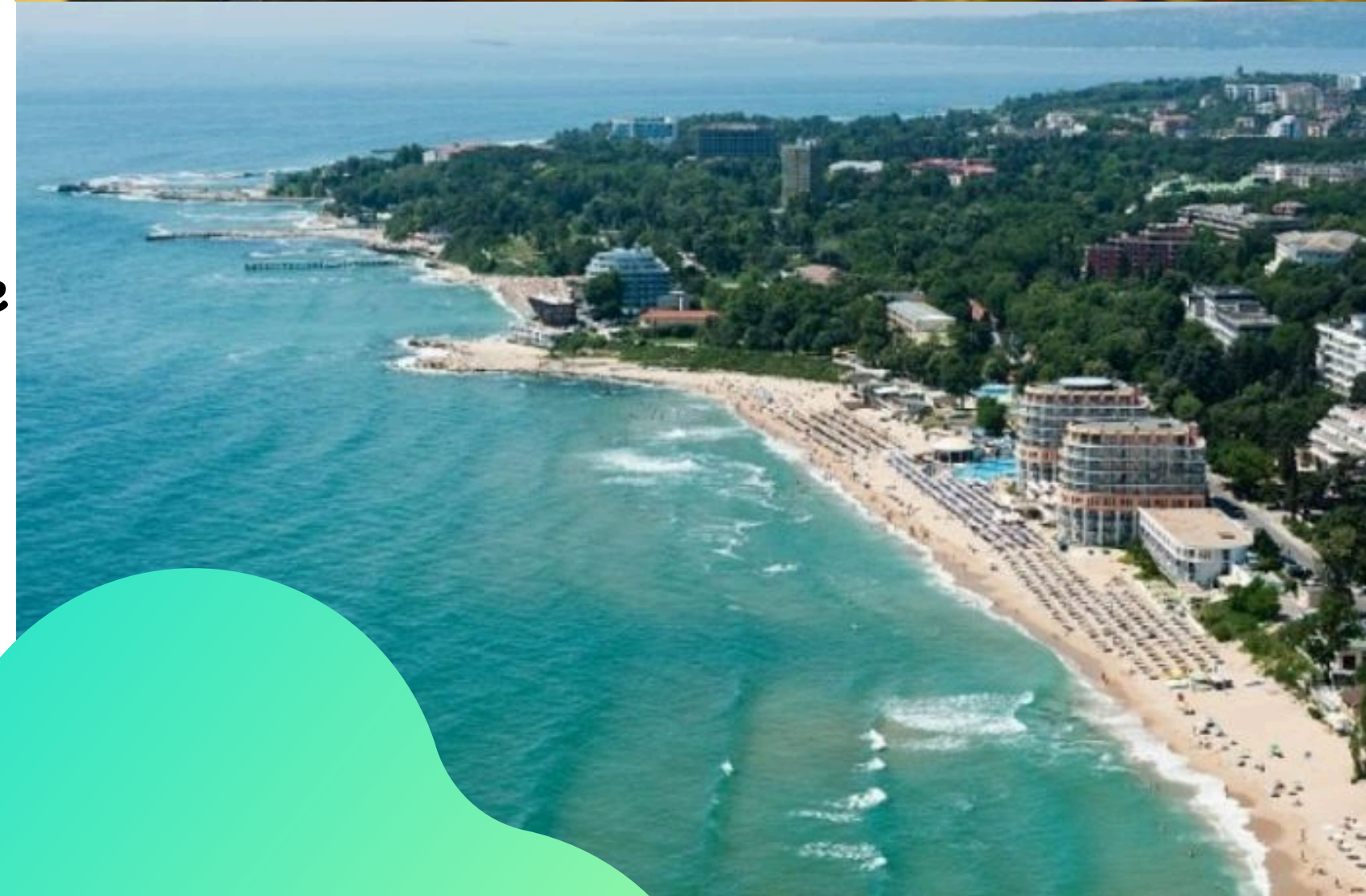
ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Civic & Leadership Academy is an intensive youth exchange designed to safeguard and deepen liberal democratic space among young people in South-Eastern Europe. In a time where liberal democracy is under pressure, this project aims to empower a new generation of civic and political leaders grounded in human rights, rule of law, and pluralism.

Why this project?

We believe that youth are the frontline of democratic resilience. This academy focuses on:

- **Civic Literacy:** Understanding how decisions are made and building democratic competence.
- **Community Activation:** Moving from passive observation to local organizing and watchdog power.
- **Digital Democracy:** Learning to counter extremist narratives on platforms like TikTok and YouTube with "hope-based" content.



OBJECTIVES

- To equip 32 young leaders with the knowledge and critical thinking skills needed to understand how the state works, including decision-making and public budgets.
- To provide 32 participants with the tools for community-level organizing to prevent democratic backsliding while fostering a deep-seated commitment to human rights, rule of law, and pluralism as a defense against illiberal values.
- To establish a multidisciplinary network of organisations from Romania, Bulgaria, Turkiye and Greece that are capable of rapid mobilization around democratic milestones and regional bridge, sharing tools for civic resilience.

METHODOLOGY

- **The project's methodology relies on non-formal education throughout all activities, creating a mutual learning environment where participants can share approaches and experiences using diverse nonformal methods.**
- **To deliver knowledge on the topic and develop participants' skills, we will use various non-formal learning methods: teamwork, various types of games, public cafe, open space, debates, visualization and simulation methods, public speaking, theater, street animation, city quest, street interview, brainstorming, intercultural learning methods.**

OUR PARTICIPANT PROFILE

- **Between 18 and 30 years. Team leader 18-35 years. Gender equality must be taken into consideration**
- **Participants interested in social entrepreneurship and being the next leaders of their communities**
- **At least a medium level of English is necessary!**
- **Eager to be part of the mobility program and committed to creating a strong impact on the project and its results**
- **Willing to take on responsibilities, actively participate in, and follow up on project activities and all project phases**
- **Keen to meet new people, explore different cultures, and make a societal contribution.**
- **Open to sharing and discussing ideas with others**



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Civic & Leadership Academy

Participating Countries

Bulgaria
Romania
Greece
Turkiye

Period

**17.05.2026 -
29.05.2026**
2 travel days
**11 days of
activities.**

Participants

We will select 8 participants per country: 7 young people, 18-30 years old, and one group leader without an upper age limit.



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PLACE

Sunny Beach (Bulgarian: Слънчев бряг, Slanchev bryag) is a seaside resort at the Black Sea coast of Bulgaria, 35 km (22 mi) north of Burgas and 94 km (58 mi) south of Varna. SunnyBeach has become the largest tourist and vacation spot in the country. Today, The Bulgarian resort of Sunny Beach has been recognised in the prestigious ranking of the 100 best beaches in the world. This ranking is based on the votes of tourism influencers and travel experts who identified the most attractive beaches. The beach in Sunny Beach was ranked 84th. This shows that this beach attracts the attention of not only locals but also tourists from all over the world. Its rapid growth makes it the largest resort on the entire Black Sea coast; to the south, the complex has merged with the town of Nesebar.

ACCOMODATION

The activities will take place at Hotel Diamond, Sunny Beach.

<https://hoteldiamondbg.com/en/>

Participants will share rooms of 2-3 roommates of the same sex, with their own shower, TV, and fridge. Three meals per day and two coffee breaks. If you have allergies or special diets, please inform the organizers through the application forms. The hotel is all-inclusive, so all food preferences will be provided daily.

You can also stay in Bulgaria 2-3 days before or after the project, but it will be on your own expense.



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MUST KNOW

- **Tolerance and Cooperation:** You need to be tolerant, follow instructions from the volunteers and organizers from the Academy, and always be open to dialogue and reaching agreements.
- **Extended Stay:** You can stay in Bulgaria for up to two days after the end of the project at your own expense.
- **Travel Expense Reimbursement:** It is mandatory to keep all bus tickets, train tickets, or fuel receipts to be reimbursed for your travel expenses. Travel expenses will be reimbursed during the project, only after presenting all necessary documents.
- **Covered Costs:** All project-related expenses are covered by the European Commission.
- **Respect and Adherence to Rules:** Ensure you respect all participants and adhere to the project's rules and guidelines throughout your stay.

CULTURAL EXCHANGE

EACH EVENING, ONE COUNTRY WILL HAVE THE EXCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITY TO HOST THEIR CULTURAL NIGHT, MAKING IT A UNIQUE AND IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE FOR EVERYONE.

WHY IS THIS SPECIAL?

MORE TIME TO SHINE AND SHARE YOUR CULTURE WITHOUT RUSHING OR SHARING THE SPOTLIGHT. FREEDOM TO BE AS CREATIVE AS YOU LIKE!

WHAT CAN YOU INCLUDE?

PERFORMANCES, GAMES, QUIZZES, THEATER, MUSIC, WORKSHOPS, OR ANY CREATIVEACTIVITY. SHARE TRADITIONAL FOOD, DRINKS, OR SOUVENIRS TO LEAVE A LASTING MEMORY OFYOUR CULTURE WITH THE GROUP.



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REIMBURSEMENT



GREEN TRAVEL ONLY

The project is financed by the Erasmus+ programme. The costs related to accommodation and food, along with the coffee breaks, will be covered by the hosting organisation, and the travel costs will be reimbursed according to the Erasmus+ country standards. Personal and medical insurance are the responsibility of the individual participant. We will not be responsible for any loss of luggage and personal effects, delayed and/or cancelled flights, or any other transportation.

Make sure that you keep all your original travel tickets (no screenshots) because they are needed for the reimbursement. Use only PUBLIC TRANSPORT and select the cheapest and/or most affordable tickets. Taxi/private transportation (such as a personal car) is not eligible for reimbursement.

**Before booking any tickets, please get in touch with the
host organisation!**

**BULGARIA 35 EUR ROMANIA 275 EUR
GREECE 275 EUR TURKEY 275 EUR**



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HEALTH AND SAFETY

SECURITY ADVISE

Participants should be careful with personal belongings and know not to leave anything unattended outside their rooms. There are no specific do's or do not's in Bulgaria, just please use the common sense and be careful as you would usually be on a holiday in a foreign country. When in doubt, please ask the organizers.

INSURANCE

Although we can't reimburse you the cost of health insurances, we strongly advise you to acquire travel insurance on your own expense for the whole duration of the project. Also, please have the European Health Card with you or another valid EU healthcare insurance.

MEDICINE

We advise you to bring the medicine you are more used to in case of emergency or anticipating some specific situations.



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CONTACTS

Project Manager:

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More about the organisation: www.academyforactiveyouth.com

The project is co-financed by the Erasmus+ program of the European Union. Accommodation, meals and all logistics will be provided by the organizers during the Youth Exchange.

See you soon in sunny Bulgaria!



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